

Speech by Inche Huang bin Omar Junid, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Social Affairs, on opening of the Gymnasium of the Singapore American School on 25.4.69 at 8.30 p.m.

The Chairman Board of Governors, Principal, Ladies & Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to have been invited to participate in the opening ceremony of the Gymnasium of the Singapore American School.

2. The building of the Gymnasium by the School is a welcome response to Government's policy of creating a rugged society and what is more apt than to start producing such a society from the young in our schools.

3. With so much emphasis placed on academic attainments for securing office jobs and for admission into institutions of higher learning, most of our schools have in the past neglected the physical education of the students and whatever P.E. periods there were in the curriculum had inspired little interest either of teachers or of students.

4. However, changes in the country's economy from a purely trading port to a fast-developing industrial state and the assumption of responsibility for defence after 1971 have resulted in a re-orientation of Government's education policy. In the new policy, more attention is given not only to technical and vocational training but also to physical education.

5. The introduction of National Service under which every male citizen on attaining the age of 18 years is required to undergo a period of two years training made physical education in schools prior to the National Service more important than ever before, since physical education in schools helps to prepare boys for their vigorous training under National Service.

6. The setting up of the Gymnasium by the Singapore American school is therefore a development which the Governors of the School can well be proud of, for it comes at a time when there is a great need for it and when such a facility will be appreciated by the students who see in it a means not only to their physical well-being but also through such well-being a better chance to serve their country.

7. I have great pleasure in declaring open the Singapore American School Gymnasium.